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SERBIA AND ITS NEIGHBORING STATES.

(Continued from page 1.)

MARKS AN AWFUL ANNIVERSARY.

BELGRADE, Serbia, June 11.—The assassination of the royal family marks a great anniversary. On the same date in the year 1868 Prince Michael Obrenovitch, ruler of Serbia, was assassinated in Belgrade. His successor, King Milan, caused the execution of fourteen of those connected with the murder and Prince Karageorgevitch was arrested for complicity but after six months' imprisonment was acquitted and released.

RECENT EVENT CAUSED IT.

On April 7 King Alexander executed a coup d'etat. He issued two proclamations. The first decreed a suspension of the constitution adopted on April 19, 1901, and repealing laws passed under that which were objectionable to him, retiring the senators and councilors of state, dissolving the Parliament and reenacting the laws as they existed previous to the adopting of the constitution of 1901. The second proclamation was immediately issued and restored the constitution to its former validity.

In his first proclamation the King stated that the Senate and the Skuptshina, created under the constitution granted by him in 1901, passed laws which proved impracticable. Furthermore, he declared the constitution, by tending to fan political passions, prejudiced the interests of the fatherland and hindered its development as a state and nation. The King added that affairs in the Balkans at that time were very serious and that Serbia needed order, unity, and peace. The King then declared the constitution of 1901 suspended and the mandates of the senators to be null and void. The proclamation also retired the senators and councilors of state and dissolved the Skuptshina. Several of the laws, including the press law, the communal law, and the act governing the electoral system of the country were annulled and replaced by laws that had previously existed.

Immediately after this proclamation the King issued orders appointing his friends as new senators and councilors of state.

King Alexander's political jugglery with the Servian constitution was regarded as a dangerous experiment, but it did not meet with much surprise in Europe as it had long been known that he desired in some way to curb the power of the radical party of Servia.

The manner in which his coup d'etat was effected partook of the nature of a comedy. During the few minutes that the constitution was suspended King Alexander was an absolute monarch. These moments sufficed him to dissolve the Skuptshina and abolish half a dozen laws which, he said, undermined the authority of the crown. The obnoxious laws relate chiefly to the suffrage and were replaced by measures calculated to render the election of the Radicals extremely difficult. The press law of 1901 gave place to the more stringent measure enacted in 1882.

All the Ministers, who resigned simultaneously with the suspension of the constitution, were reinstated with the exception of Foreign Minister Lozanico who was succeeded by M. Denics, Minister of Public Works.

Of the newly appointed life members of the Senate twelve were old Liberals and supporters of the former regent, seven were formerly members of the Progressive party and five neutrals.

KING SCENTS REVOLT.

A week later on April 15 King Alexander had Colonel Ilic, commanding the Sixth Regiment at Belgrade, and six officers, arrested on a charge of conspiring against his life. He had these men before him and submitted them to a personal examination.

The root of the whole trouble in Serbia has been financial dif-

ficulty. The army of all ranks has been receiving little or no pay, and its enthusiasm for the Obrenovitch dynasty, which King Milan kept alive by making the army his first consideration, entirely vanished when the army became suspicious on the arrest of some of the officers by King Alexander of charges of attempting his life. King Alexander's marriage to Queen Draga increased the difficulties, especially Queen Draga's insistence that her young brother, who was among those who have now met death, should be acknowledged as heir to the throne.

THE DEAD MONARCHS.

The late young King of Serbia represented one of the newest royal families of Europe. The dynasty was founded by his great-grandfather's brother, Milosch Obrenovitch, who began life as a swine-herd; and its brief history has been a stormy one. Milosch's son and successor, Prince Michael, was assassinated, and his grand-nephew, the later and erratic King Milan, escaped a like fate by abdicating in favor of his son, Alexander.

King Alexander I was born on August 14, 1876, and succeeded his father, King Milan, upon his abdication on March 6, 1889. At that time Alexander was in his minority, so a regency was established which was to last until Alexander should reach his eighteenth year. When but seventeen years of age he overthrew this regency, and took upon himself the prerogatives of king.

Then he married. His bride, Queen Draga, was formerly Mme. Maschin, a widow, and had been lady-in-waiting to King Alexander's mother, the unfortunate Queen Natalie. Mme. Maschin was of obscure birth, and twelve years older than the young ruler, who took the throne when his father, the notorious King Milan, abdicated in 1889. King Alexander's liking for Mme. Maschin had been known for a long time in court circles, but the announcement of his betrothal to her in July, 1900, caused a great sensation. The Servian Ministry promptly resigned, declaring the proposed marriage preposterous and a menace to the state. Ex-King Milan heard the news at Carlsbad, and immediately telegraphed his resignation as commander of the Servian army. He also started at once for Belgrade, but the young King again showed his spirit. He sent officers to the frontier to prevent his father's return and organized a Ministry.

Sweeping aside all opposition, King Alexander married Mme. Maschin in Belgrade on August 5, 1900. Though the marriage had been so vigorously opposed officially, the people seemed to have no objection, and the bridal party was enthusiastically cheered. The King had taken the precaution, however, to have the streets lined with troops.

The domestic affairs of the King dropped from public attention until it was whispered, early in the year of 1901 that an heir was expected to the Servian throne. In May there was a scandal when it was announced that the expectation was without foundation. Queen Draga was at once accused of willful deception of the King, and it was announced that he was furious with her. Public opinion was divided as to whether she was suffering from hysteria or had attempted to dupe the King. It was said that the King intended to apply to the Holy Synod for a divorce, but he did nothing, and the scandal was finally forgotten. Queen Draga, however, had lost her popularity with the people.

The King and his Queen Consort recently paid a visit to Hungary that caused much comment. Ostensibly the sole motive of the journey of the royal couple was to visit the grave of Milan, who died in grief over his son's marriage to Draga. Milan said in his will that he was so disappointed over the son's marriage that he did not wish to be buried in Serbia. He wished to be buried at a small Hungarian town and his wish was complied with. King Alexander and Queen Draga duly made their little pilgrimage to the grave but it was said in Serbia that they also paid a little pilgrimage to the Emperor of Austria and that Alexander had arranged with Franz Josef to secure Austrian troops to help him in case his own people became rebellious.

But Alexander was an unnatural man. Many of his subjects declared him to be a raving maniac. During the last couple of years his little kingdom has been in turmoil. There has been plotting on all sides. Long ago Alexander might have met his fate had it not been for shrewd ministers who saved him.

At one time last year it was reported that Alexander had agreed to sell out his kingdom to a gambling syndicate with the object of converting it into a second Monaco and Monte Carlo.



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